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SOVIET PEAT INDUSTRY INCREASES MECHANIZATION AND CONSTRUCTION WORK; DEFICIENCIES NOTED

/Information contained in this report was extracted from various articles of the October, November, and December issues of Torfyannaya Promyshlennost'./

In the first 9 months of 1950, the USSR peat industry increased peat production 22 percent over the same period in 1949. New machines permitted increased mechanization with the result that 98.3 percent of all peat (milled, elevator, and hydropeat) was mechanically extracted. Of the peat extracted, 34.5 percent was by fully mechanized milled peat methods, as against 21.2 percent in 1940. Use of the elevator method for extracting peat increased 50 percent over 1940. This was made possible by the introduction of electric spreader machines which completely eliminated manual work in distributing the lump peat in the drying areas and increased the productivity of the extracting machine 100 percent.

Excavation work was done manually until 1948 when a new excavator, capable of operating on nondrained peat fields was designed. With the aid of this machine, 80 percent of the excavation work was mechanized in 1950. Disk and auger-type drain-digging machines were produced which drained all hydropeat drying fields up to 0.8 meters deep by 1950.

In 1950, peat gathering was 63 percent mechanized, as against 39.2 percent in 1949 and 3.6 percent in 1940. Loading work was 97 percent mechanized in 1950, as against 29.7 percent in 1940; and 99 percent of the reloading work was done mechanically. Much work was accomplished in the automatization of pipe laying and stump removal. A machine was developed in the Orekhovskiy Peat Enterprise which practically eliminates the need for explosives in breaking up frozen ground in the spring. This will not only make it possible to start operations earlier but will cut costs drastically.

The OF-3 storing machine was improved by the addition of a new scraper device and the performance of this machine was improved 30 percent. More OF-3 machines will include this modification so that it can be tested under various conditions during the 1951 season. To mechanize stump removal, the Petrovsko-Kobelevskiy Peat Enterprise experimented with the TE-2M excavator which was

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equipped with a comb-like scraper to take out the stumps. Results of this operation were inconclusive but the machine worked well under normal conditions in quarries using the "new standard" peat pumps. The VNIITP (All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Peat Industry) also experimented with ways to mechanize stump removal. Tests of an overhanging boom mounted on the new standard crane which also handled the peat pump were conducted at the Irinovskiy Peat Enterprise. A grab bucket suspended from the boom picked up the stumps. This apparatus proved valuable for removing stumps in the immediate area of the peat pumps and is necessary for the normal operation of the pump.

As a result of this progress in mechanization and in improved working methods, production per worker increased 52 percent over 1946. In 1949, the number of average yearly workers was 30 percent less than in 1945; and in the period 1945-1950, the number of seasonal workers required decreased 41 percent. Experiences during the 1950 season have shown, however, that many enterprises still operated with more personnel than needed. This should be remedied in the 1951 season.

Railroad transport was developed considerably in this period.

In 1950, plants of the Glavtorfmash (Main Administration of Peat Machinery) increased production and generally improved the quality of their machines. The Ivtorfmash, Demikhov, and Simferopol' plants and the Plant imeni Ya. M. Sverdlov completed their 1946-50 plans ahead of schedule, while some plants, including the Demikhov and Leningrad Machine-Building Plant, produced low-quality products which caused breakdowns, lost time, and interrupted work schedules at the peat enterprises. Frequently, the peat enterprises had to modify individual parts and mechanisms, especially electrical equipment which was often poorly installed. During the 1949 season, the TEMP-2 excavators which were delivered to the peat enterprises from the Ivtorfmash Plant were not fully equipped. Plant representatives, therefore, had to come to the enterprises and complete the installation of this equipment. Also, electric motors designed for other purposes, were delivered to the peat enterprises and these motors would breakdown after a short period of use, or would require that the electric systems at the enterprises be altered.

Glavtorfostroy (Main Administration for the Construction of Peat Enterprises) achieved notable successes in recent years. Over 30 percent of all extracted peat was taken from 20 new fields in 1950, as against only 7.1 percent in 1945.

In the past 4 years, the five ministries which produce peat built housing with a total floor space of 346,000 square meters and 400 public and industrial buildings. Of this, the Glavtorfostroy built housing with 286,000 square meters of floor space and 250 public and industrial buildings. In 1949, all peat-producing ministries completed their housing plans and 25 million rubles were spent for current and capital repair.

However, living conditions are still unsatisfactory on some enterprises and many temporary buildings should be replaced by permanent types. In the first 6 months of 1950, housing construction in Glavtorf (Main Administration of the Peat Industry) was completed only 77 percent and Glavtorfostroy failed to complete buildings with a total of 9,000 square meters as was called for in the plan. Work contracted for outside of Glavtorfostroy was responsible for this deficiency. The Ministry of Light Industry, RSFSR also failed to complete its housing plan in the peat industries. On 1 July, the year plan was only 34 percent completed and no buildings at all were built on some enterprises. The year plan for public building was 58 percent completed on 1 July.

These plans were not completed due mainly to material shortages, insufficient mechanization of productional processes, and poor work organization. Much work was done on the sites of new enterprises but older enterprises which were in need of improvement and expansion were neglected.

In the postwar years, Glavtorfostroy prepared 8,500 hectares of new milled peat fields and 6,850 hectares of new hydropeat fields. In preparing new peat fields, 17,000 hectares of trees have been cleared and more than 10 million cubic meters of excavation work accomplished.

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